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BANGLADESH

PRESS RELEASE

USAID SUPPORTS GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH TO WORK WITH PRIVATE SECTORS TO PROMOTE FAMILY PLANNING

DHAKA, SEPTEMBER 19-- The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has recently launched a new initiative—"Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS)"—to increase the involvement of the private sector in provision of family planning services.

Under President Obama's Global Health Initiative (GHI), USAID will support the work of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) to increase the use of effective and voluntary family planning methods and to expand the role of the private sector in health. Specifically, USAID will work with private sector medical providers to meet the unmet need for a full range of contraceptive products and methods among the 12 percent of Bangladeshi young couples who have expressed a desire to space or limit pregnancies, but are not currently using any contraceptive method. USAID also provides family planning services in underserved areas through a NGO network of 325 Shurjer Hashi clinics and markets contraceptives through the world's largest social marketing company (SMC) that provides more than 30 percent of all modern contraceptive methods Bangladeshis use.

The growing private sector in Bangladesh can play a significant role in meeting the unmet family planning needs of Bangladeshi population. Over the past decade, there has been significant growth in the private (especially for-profit) health sector. USAID, through the SHOPS program, will aim to involve both NGO and for-profit entities in addressing the health needs of the under-served population and will focus on providing quality health services and products at affordable prices. Consequently, these efforts will contribute to the GOB's goal of improving reproductive health and reducing under-five and maternal mortality in Bangladesh.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided over \$5.8 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. In 2011 alone, USAID provided more than \$180 million to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh. USAID supports programs in Bangladesh that: promote democratic institutions and practices, expand food security and economic opportunity, improve health and education services, and increase resiliency to climate change through adaptation and low carbon development.

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